

Trademan

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T O

THE LORD PROVOST STODART.

MY LORD,

I SHOULD not have thought, that, to support the present political contest, any person should have dared to find fault with your Lordship's just endeavours to free the trades from bondage. Considering such bad effects have been found, by all the incorporations, from this power, I may say, usurped by the town-council, in shortening our leets; yet, when I find any person under the signature of *An Old Magistrate*, and, at the same time, under a mask of friendship, reflecting on your conduct, in endeavouring to free us from that tyranny, as if you had only raised that report, in order to gain the mob on your side, I think myself called upon as a tradesman, and not as an OLD MAGISTRATE'S dependant, to endeavour to show, upon what motives you have invariably acted, since your last election into the magistracy.

MR. D——LE, however much as an individual he deserves our greatest attention, yet, as a chief magistrate, had so little engaged the affections of his fellow-citizens, in particular, in bringing into the church persons not agreeable, (however deserving) was

not

not thought fit, when your Lordship came to the chair, to fill that important office.

His great supporter now, Mr. L——, was then the *cause* of his *disappointment*: And, the more effectually to get his *revenge*, he insisted, not out of personal regard to your *Lordship*, but to endeavour to raise his *sinking credit* in the town of Edinburgh, that a person so much respected by all your fellow-citizens as you then was, should be placed in the chair, in opposition to him. In this all parties agree. But how much disappointed must Mr. L—— now be, to find, that you have acted with a spirit, in supporting your office, which he never was capable of showing? You, naturally, did not think yourself obliged to that gentleman, for assisting in bringing you into the Council, as you could not but be sensible, that it was not from friendship to you, but from personal enmity to Mr. D——le. His behaviour shortly evinced the truth of this, a quarrel soon arising betwixt you, owing to your Lordship's, and your friends, disinterested conduct in C——l.

FROM these circumstances, no doubt, your Lordship was exceedingly surpris'd, upon your seeing Sir L—— in London in December last, to find, that these two gentlemen were perfectly agreed, and that Mr. L——, to make up the quarrel, had recommended Mr. D—— to succeed you in office. You could by no means look upon yourself to be tied to regard Mr. D—— as your successor, as you came in, in direct opposition to him, and without any promise being given upon your part. Nay, nor did

Sir



Sir L—— himself then pretend to say, that he had in any ways promised, that Mr. D—— should be your successor. Had he said so, as Chief Magistrate of this city, you are bound in duty, to have let our representative know that you were determined to consult his constituents as to the properest person to succeed you, and that no member of parliament should endeavour to make himself the elector of his electors. But, as Sir L—— did not then urge a promise in Mr. D——'s favour, you returned him an answer, which every good citizen must commend you for, that however well the gentleman recommended might stand in your personal regard, you were convinced, that neither your friends nor you would agree to any one that was nominated by that interest. From that time, you looked out for a proper person to succeed you in office, when naturally you cast your eyes upon a gentleman, who has always been respected, nay, revered by his fellow-citizens, and not in the *decline of life*, as that *Old Magistrate* supposes, but having all his *faculties as clear*, and *his heart much sounder*, than many who have of late been in distinguished offices in the C——l. This choice was approved of by all your friends, then a majority in the town-council. By what means, since the arrival of Sir L——, your majority have become a minority, I shall not pretend to say; but sure it must appear to every unbiass'd mind, that the most undue means have been used. But,

Oaths are but words, and words are but wind,

Too feeble implements to bind.

For if the devil, to serve his turn

Can tell truth; why the saints shou'd scorn,

When

When it serves their's, to swear and lie,
 I think there's little reason why.
 We're not commanded to forbear,
 Indefinitely at all to swear,
 But to swear idly, and in vain,
 Without *self-interest* or *gain* :
 For breaking of an oath, and lying,
 Is but a kind of self-denying ;
 A *saint-like* virtue, and from hence,
 Some have broke oaths by *providence* ;
 Some to the *glory* of the *Lord*,
 Perjur'd themselves, and broke their word ;
 And this the constant rule and practice,
 Of all our late *apostles acts* is.

THE Old Magistrate must be grossly misinformed, as to your
 Lordship's conduct respecting the funds of the city, as every per-
 son in council must do you the justice to own, that you have uni-
 formly showed a scrupulous attachment to the saving of the city
 revenues.—Go on, my Lord, in the path upon which you have en-
 tered ; and you need not fear, that the scurrilous squibs of OLD
 MAGISTRATES, their HIRELINGS, or any such prejudiced, self-
 interested scribblers, can ever, in the eyes of men of sense, or
 your fellow-citizens in general, be derogatory to your honour, or
 prejudicial to your interest.



A TRADESMAN.